

9-1-2018

Sports Briefs

Vince Moore
Furman University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine>

Recommended Citation

Moore, Vince (2018) "Sports Briefs," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 61 : Iss. 2 , Article 16.
Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol61/iss2/16>

This Regular Feature is made available online by Journals, part of the Furman University Scholar Exchange (FUSE). It has been accepted for inclusion in Furman Magazine by an authorized FUSE administrator. For terms of use, please refer to the [FUSE Institutional Repository Guidelines](#). For more information, please contact scholarexchange@furman.edu.

SPORTS BRIEFS

BY VINCE MOORE

SAVING THE BEST FOR LAST

Even as glorious as her Furman running career was, Allie Buchalski '18 never failed to surprise her coaches with her ability to constantly improve.

Lightly recruited out of high school and underappreciated on the national stage in college, she kept getting better every year and accomplishing things never before done by a Furman runner, becoming a seven-time All-American and leading the women's cross-country team to a seventh-place finish in the 2018 NCAA tournament.

But after graduating with honors last May, Buchalski had one more surprise in store. She finished second in the 5,000-meter run at the NCAA Women's Outdoor Track & Field Championships, racing past four of the nation's best college runners in the final 200 meters and making winner Karissa Schweizer of Missouri glad there weren't another 50 meters left to run.

It was arguably the greatest individual performance by an athlete in Furman history, and it was a validation of what made Buchalski great. There was never a moment too big for her; the higher the stakes, the better she seemed to perform.

"It took us (Furman coaches) five years to learn not to short-change Allie, to realize there was



nothing she couldn't do if we prepared her well enough," says Furman Head Track and Field and Cross-Country Coach Robert Gary. "She was in the best shape of her life at that meet and she had her greatest performance. I was watching in the stands and I could see how relaxed she was. With about 150 meters to go, I said, 'She's going to win this race.' And she nearly did."

Buchalski's running career is far from over. Shortly after her finish in the NCAA 5,000-meter, she signed a professional contract to run for the Brooks Beasts Track Club in Seattle. Her next goals will be to qualify for the World Championships next year in Qatar, and earn a spot on the U.S. team for the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Buchalski's performance at the NCAA championships capped a banner year for Furman athletics. The Paladins finished 73rd among 291 NCAA Division I qualifying schools in the Learfield Directors' Cup competition, which measures the performance of all sports. That was not only the best finish among Southern Conference schools, it was third best in the state (behind Clemson and South Carolina) and ahead

of Atlantic Coast Conference schools Boston College (95), Pittsburgh (111) and Georgia Tech (121). It was also Furman's best finish ever in the competition, topping the previous high of 86th recorded during the 2001-02 school year.

ALL-AMERICANS AND CONFERENCE CROWNS

The Paladins captured a total of six SoCon team championships and advanced six teams into NCAA tournament competition, including the nationally ranked women's golf team, which posted an 11th place finish in the NCAA Championships. Furman volleyball and women's tennis teams won SoCon regular season championships, and men's and women's cross-country, women's tennis, and women's golf claimed league tournament crowns.

The Paladins produced five All-Americans, eight SoCon Players of the Year, seven conference Coaches of the Year, and 100 all-conference performers in 2017-18.

